

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2, 4 and 5 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 1 and 3 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) Device for closing ~~the~~ a front flap in a self-dimensioning machine for closing ~~the~~ upper flaps of parallelepiped boxes ~~of the type,~~ said device comprising

a base with a support surface for the boxes,

a couple of drive belts ~~that can be motorised~~ placed at ~~the~~ two sides of said support surface ~~and that can be brought close to each other~~ to make a drive engagement with ~~the~~ sides of the boxes,

a head above said support surface, ~~that carries~~ carrying closing devices for closing ~~the~~ front, rear and side flaps of the boxes and ~~can be~~ commanded to descend from a rest position to engage ~~the above-mentioned devices~~ with the upper flaps of the boxes and provide for closing ~~them~~ the upper flaps of the boxes,
and

means for detecting ~~the~~ position and ~~the~~ dimensions of the boxes for ~~the~~ automatic command of ~~the~~ movements of the machine, ~~characterised in that it comprises~~

a rod for straightening and partially closing the front flap, that is pivoted on said head and is stressed to keep itself flexibly in a vertical position,

a vertically mobile touching group for detecting ~~the~~ a height of the boxes ~~and successively to said head in the~~ an advancement direction of the boxes,

a longitudinal central guide for completing the closing of the front flap, which is carried by said touching group so as to position itself in a horizontal position above said support surface at a height corresponding to the height detected of the boxes for meeting the front flap partially closed by said straightening rod and to complete its movement to the closing position,

said longitudinal central guide being linked to said touching group so as to find itself normally in an inclined position in relation to a horizontal position, and being fitted with means for commanding its movement to said horizontal position.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) Device according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said rod for straightening and partially closing the front flap is flexibly kept in said angular position by a pneumatic cylinder.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

Please add new claims 6-10 as follows:

6. (New) Device for closing a front flap in a self-dimensioning machine for closing upper flaps of parallelepiped boxes, said device comprising

a base with a support surface for the boxes,

a couple of drive belts placed at two sides of said support surface to make a drive engagement with sides of the boxes,

a head above said support surface carrying closing devices for closing front, rear and side flaps of the boxes and commanded to descend from a rest position to engage with the upper flaps of the boxes and provide for closing the upper flaps of the boxes, and

means for detecting position and dimensions of the boxes for automatic command of movements of the machine,

a rod for straightening and partially closing the front flap, that is pivoted on said head and is stressed to keep itself flexibly in a vertical position,

a vertically mobile touching group for detecting a height of the boxes in an advancement direction of the boxes,

a longitudinal central guide for completing the closing of the front flap, which is carried by said touching group so as to position itself in a horizontal position above said support surface at a height corresponding to the height detected of the boxes for meeting the front flap partially closed by said straightening rod and to complete its movement to the closing position,

said longitudinal central guide being linked to said touching group so as to result in a vertical tilting in relation to said horizontal position.

7. (New) A device for closing a rear upper flap in a self-dimensioning machine for closing upper flaps of parallelepiped boxes, said device comprising

a base with a support surface for the boxes,

a couple of drive belts placed at two opposite sides of said support surface to make a drive engagement with opposite sides of the boxes to drive the boxes along an advancement direction,

a head assembly vertically movably arranged above said support surface, carrying closing devices for closing front, rear and side upper flaps of the boxes and commanded to descend from a rest position to engage the closing devices with the upper flaps of the boxes and provide for closing the upper flaps of the boxes, and first and second height detecting means for detecting a height of

the boxes with open upper flaps and, respectively, with closed upper flaps,

said head assembly comprises a vertically movable head provided with said first height detecting means and a vertically movable touching group provided with said second height detecting means, said head and said touching group being separately commanded to descend in succession towards said support surface up to respective positions depending on the height of the box with open upper flaps detected by said first height detecting means and, respectively, on the height of the box with closed upper flaps detected by said second height detecting means, and

said closing devices comprise a rod for straightening and partially closing the front upper flap, pivoted on said head and stressed to keep itself yieldingly in a vertical position and, located downstream in an advancement direction of the boxes, a longitudinal central guide for completing the closing of the front upper flap, carried by said touching group so as to position itself in a horizontal position above said support surface at a height corresponding to the height detected by said second height detecting means for meeting the front upper flap partially closed by said straightening rod and to complete movement of the front upper flap to the closed position.

8. (New) A device according to claim 7, wherein said rod for straightening and partially closing the front flap is yieldingly kept in a vertical position by a pneumatic cylinder fitted with a pressure regulator.

9. (New) A device according to claim 7, wherein said longitudinal central guide is linked to said touching group so as to be normally in an inclined position in relation to the horizontal position, there being provided means for commanding movement of said longitudinal central guide to said horizontal position.

10. (New) A device according to claim 7, wherein said longitudinal central guide is linked to said touching group so as to be vertically tilting in relation to said horizontal position.